

The SEER

DECEMBER 2025



WORSHIP WITH US THIS
CHRISTMAS



**Services for Advent,
Christmas Eve and
Sundays of Christmas**

Sundays at 9:30 am

December 7- ELW, setting 5
Special German/English Service

December 14- ELW, setting 5
Congregational Meeting

December 21- ELW, setting 5
**3rd Sunday Food Offering
Hanging of the Greens**

December 28- Lessons & Carols

January 4- Epiphany

Wednesdays at 7pm

December 3, 10 & 17
Advent Evening Prayer
Soup Supper at 6pm

December 24- Christmas Eve



**December
Schedules & Notes**

Saturday, Dec. 6

Annual **Bake/Craft/Quilt Sale** from 9-noon
Bring a friend!

Sunday, December 14

Congregational Meeting
after the service.

Please bring your wrapped **Sharing Tree** gift.

Sunday, December 21

Hanging of the Greens
after the service

All are welcome - no experience necessary!

Third Sunday Food Offering

Food, bags, and 12 ct. egg cartons can be left in
the baskets under the south coat rack.

There will be no December **Book Club** or **Bible Study**.

**Newsletter Articles, Calendar Items
and Volunteer lists** are needed Monday,
December 29 for the January SEER.

**December 22 - January 2, there are no set office
hours. Please call ahead if you need in the building
or some assistance from the staff.**

The season of Advent is one of anticipation and expectation. Even as we return to it each year, it seems to sneak up on me as a wonderful and energetic surprise. Anyone else?

There is so much hustle and bustle at this time of year, and Advent is a reminder to slow down and reflect. We know where this journey will take us: to the arrival of Christ into the world as a baby, the incarnation of God among us, showing up as vulnerably as this.

Yet, there is waiting on this journey. There is change on this journey, and WE will be changed on this journey. This congregation has been in a season of new life for some time now, and you all know a lot about waiting and changing, it seems. What have you learned about anticipation and expectation in the waiting and changing? What might you pray for this Advent?

Whatever your answer, may this journey we make together be filled with wonder, hope, peace, joy, and love, as well as the gritty confidence that as the arc of justice will bend for the good in Christ's presence that continues among us, already AND not yet. The weary world will rejoice.

As we journey through Advent, we will explore texts of prophetic wisdom, new beginnings, transformation and reflection, and Jesus' family. We will move toward the great arrival of Emmanuel, God with us. We will also consider our own traditions, bringing back some elements of the German-speaking heritage service one week, and another, we will learn about saints such as Santa Lucia and Our Lady of Guadalupe, as their feast days occur in this season. We will join for Wednesday Holden Evening Prayer worship that centers on the Magnificat, and hear reflections from members of our congregation on lectionary texts. We will celebrate together, eat together, worship together, and more, on our way to Christmas, where I imagine we will do more of the same in deeper joy of Christ's birth.

Welcome to Advent. However you arrive at this season, sparkling with joy, full of grief, full of questions and doubts, feeling steady and sure, or any way else, know that this journey is for you and that God is with you. Weary or full of wonder or both, there is a place for you here.

Blessings on the way...

Pastor Breck



Bake, Craft, Quilt, Fair Trade & Alternative Gift Market

**Saturday, December 6th
9am - noon**



Bring a friend for a cup of coffee and buy a frozen pie for Christmas dinner, quilts and crafts for Christmas gifts!

The Sharing Tree is up!

It's decorated in the Parish Hall with requests from the children at Oaks Indian Mission.

Please take a moment to look over the requests. Many of the young residents of Oaks come to that safe haven with very little and they truly appreciate your loving kindness.

When you select a wish-list item, **please remember to sign the posted list so that we know who you have matched with for gift giving.** Only one gift from the list should be purchased and wrapped.

Gifts should be returned to Salem by **Sunday, December 14** so they can be delivered to Oaks in time for the children's Christmas party.



Dear all,

We enter this post-Dave Lewis era with trepidation and we hope that Dave will be joining us by Zoom to keep the conversations lively.

As tradition dictates, we will start Advent (November 30) with our friend Professor Luke Timothy Johnson and his year A presentation on the Gospel of Matthew. Our schedule is:

November 30: Gospel of Matthew – Synagogue Down the Street

December 7: Gospel of Matthew – The Messiah of Israel

December 14: Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting

December 21: Gospel of Matthew – Jesus and Torah

ADULT Sunday School SCHEDULE

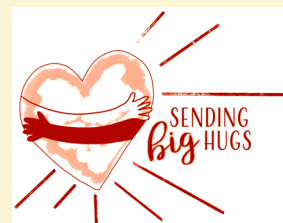
After Advent, we will begin the course entitled “The Apocalypse: Controversies and Meaning in Western History” by Professor Craig R. Koester. An overview of the course states: “Christians and non-Christians alike have been debating the message of the book of Revelation ever since it was first written. What are we to make of it? These 24 thought-provoking and enlightening lectures are your authoritative guide to this extraordinary work. In them, you'll explore the historical and intellectual background of the Apocalypse; enjoy a close reading of John's text, focusing on the meaning of its images; and consider the wide-ranging impact of the book on Christian and Western history.”

Please join us when you can. Terry Gipson

To our dearest friends,

There are no adequate words to say “Thank You” for the beautiful God's Speed and farewell blessing and greatest reception! From the start you all being there with special greetings, thoughtful food, pictures to remember on the tables, signed volleyball and the postcards we are looking forward to. You are all so special. Our years at Salem are memories forever! Much love.

Judy and Dave
(Their new address is under Friends and Family at a Distance in the middle of the Congregational Directory)



The Tulsa Area Lutheran *Messiah*

**Come and enjoy the music at
Christ the Redeemer,
2250 E 71st St. Tulsa
740136, Sunday, Dec
7th at 2 & 4:30pm.**





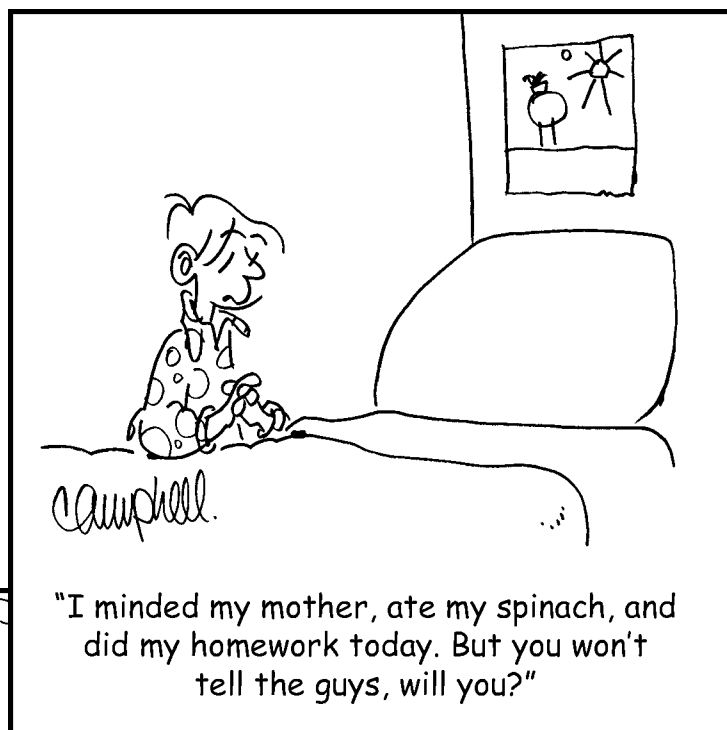
Birthdays

- 1 Cindy Haseley
- 4 Robert Wolff
- 8 Lisa Carney
- Violet Macklin
- Kaitlin Schmidt
- 13 Michelle Ratzlaff
- Jacob Wolff
- 16 Scott Hubbard
- Chris Headrick
- 18 Elaine Ackerson
- 21 Amie Haar
- 22 Stephen Haseley
- Nate Wolfe
- 29 Miles Haar
- 31 Scott Wolff

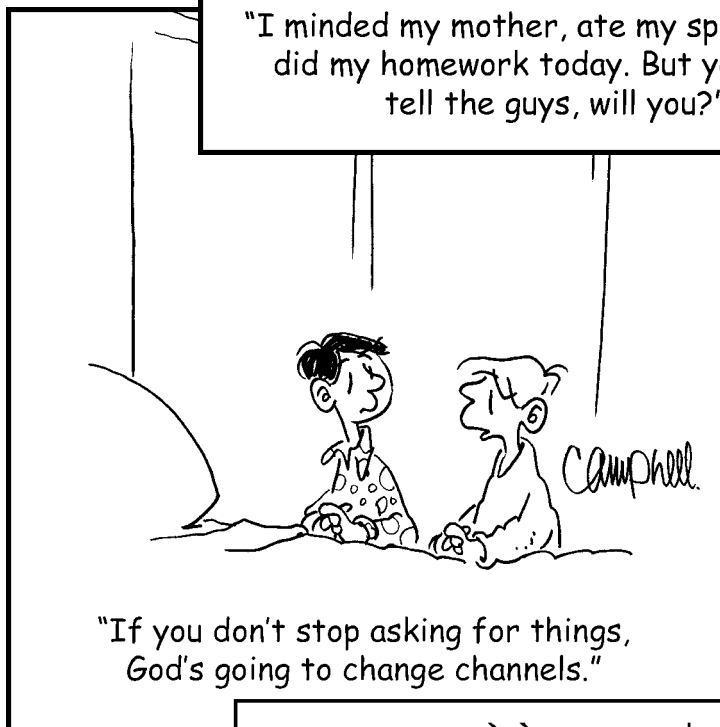
Anniversaries

- 19 Ken & Jan Bartels

Did we goof and leave you out?
Please contact the office.



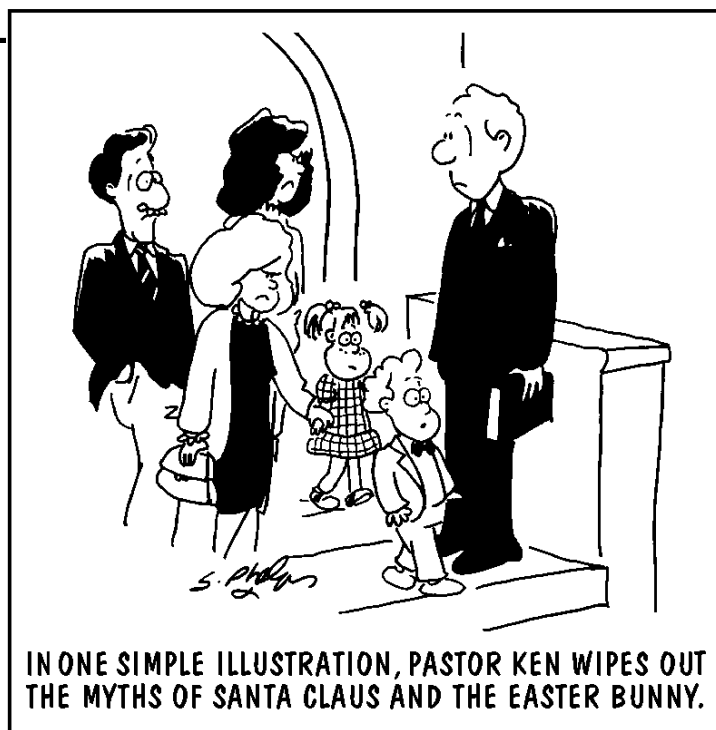
"I minded my mother, ate my spinach, and did my homework today. But you won't tell the guys, will you?"



"If you don't stop asking for things, God's going to change channels."



Please stay
after the
service on
December 21 to
help trim the
tree and
decorate the
Sanctuary.



IN ONE SIMPLE ILLUSTRATION, PASTOR KEN WIPES OUT THE MYTHS OF SANTA CLAUS AND THE EASTER BUNNY.

12 Christmas PRAYERS

1. Expectation

Fill us with hope, knowing that God kept his promise to send his Son to earth. (See *Isaiah 9:6-7.*)

2. Wonder

Just as the angel's message left Mary in awe, remind us of the joyful news of Jesus' coming. (See *Luke 1:31-33.*)

3. Humility

Like Joseph, make us willing to trust God and humbly care for others. (See *Matthew 1:20-21.*)

4. Obedience

On our earthly journey, teach us to follow your commands, just as Joseph and Mary obediently traveled to Bethlehem. (See *Luke 2:4-5.*)

5. Provision

Thank you for meeting all our needs, as you provided a stable and manger bed for Baby Jesus. (See *Luke 2:6-7.*)

6. Peace

Fill us with your perfect peace, which the angels proclaimed when Jesus was born. (See *Luke 2:13-14.*)

7. Praising

Remind us to follow the shepherds' example of celebrating and sharing the good news of Jesus' birth. (See *Luke 2:16-18.*)

8. Grateful

Keep us thankful for God's greatest gift, which Mary treasured on the first Christmas. (See *Luke 2:19.*)

9. Saved

May Jesus' precious name remind us of his power to save us from our sins. (See *Matthew 1:21.*)

10. Fulfilled

Give us content hearts, just as Simeon and Anna found fulfillment in the promised Savior. (See *Luke 2:28-32.*)

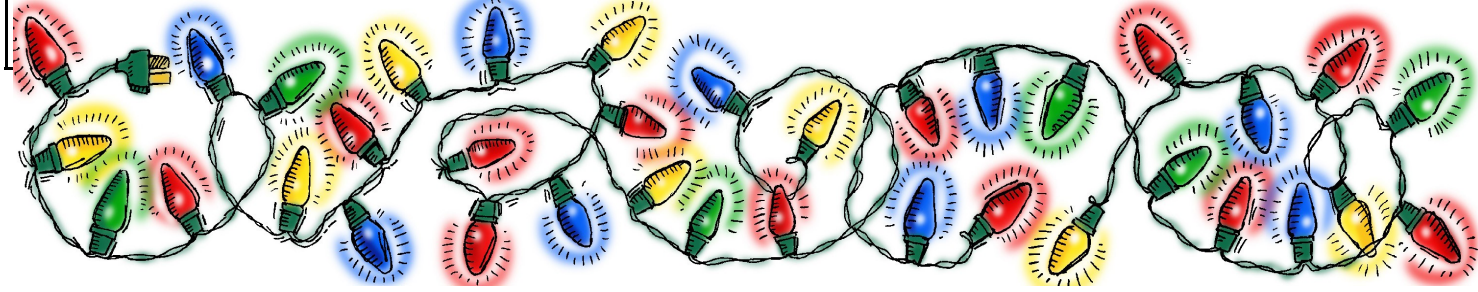
11. Worshipful

Like the gift-giving Magi, equip us to give Jesus our very best. (See *Matthew 2:10-11.*)

12. Wisdom

Help us seek your guidance as we follow and grow with Jesus. (See *Luke 2:49-52.*)





2025	December 7, ELW Setting 5,	December 14 ELW Setting 5	December 21, ELW Setting 5,	December 24, Christmas Eve 7pm	December 28, Lessons & Carols
Assisting Minister 9:30am	Cindy Pennie	Keith Schmidt	Steve Haseley	Rick Cowell	Pricilla Gerfen
Ushers 9:30am	Pat Darlington & Tracy Nordquist Wednesday, Dec 3- Dorothy Johnson	Ken & Jan Bartels Wednesday, Dec 10- Jan Bartels	Roger & Teri Sahs Wednesday, Dec 17- Marvin Schiever	Roger & Teri Sahs	Dorothy Johnson & Katherine Vijayakumar.
Greeter 9:30am	The Ackersons	The Cowells		*****	Sharon Schonthalier
Altar Guild 9:30am	Priscilla Gerfen	Maria Moccia-Wolff	Mary Jo Shiever	Dorothy Johnson, Priscilla Gerfen	Joanna Gipson
Coffee Hour 10:45	Mary Jo Shiever	Congregational Meeting	Catherine Vijayakumar		
Counters	Lori Oltmanns and Cindy Haseley	Paula Long and Keith Schmidt	Maria Moccia-Wolff and Michelle Ratzlaff	*****	Priscilla Gerfen and Terry Gipson
Altar Flowers				Poinsettias	Poinsettias
Campus Ministry	*****	Thursday, December 5 Dead Week- Eat Out	Thursday, December 12 Student Pot-luck		*****

Naserian Kambaine is a beloved member of our Salem community and a graduate student from Arusha, Tanzania, working in Stillwater to complete her Ph.D in Chemical Engineering. She is the eldest of 6 children and her father is a Lutheran minister. He and Naserian's stepmother believe both their daughters and sons should have equal educational opportunities; however, it is a struggle to provide the necessary funds.

Traditionally, in Tanzania, girls leave school at an early age to help with chores, childcare and farming, then marry and start families. Naserian's family is committed to changing that for their children.

When I met Naserian at Salem and heard the story of her family, I hoped perhaps we could help her family by paying school fees for her two youngest siblings. Other siblings are in secondary school with scholarships or have graduated from college.

Thanks to your generous support, we have paid the school fees for Nathan and Neng'ida for the past two years, enabling them to continue their education. And we have the funds needed to support both children for the upcoming 2026 school year. Your commitment ensured that vital educational needs were met, directly funding tuition, supplies, and other necessities. Because of you, Nathan and Neng'ida have the opportunity to pursue their dreams and build a better future for themselves and their community.



Thank you for your kindness and belief in their potential.

Elaine Ackerson

To read the letter that came from the school, please see the next page.



We have a new Coffee Hour sign-up at the pass-thru to the kitchen. We'll need at least 2 people to help with the Coffee Hour before the Congregational Meeting on December 14. Thank you for all your help!



**LESSONS
& CAROLS**

Sunday, December 28th, at 9:30am, come to hear The Story told in readings and song.



Upendo
Friends
School

Academics and Talents Excellence

November 21, 2025

RE: APPRECIATION AND UPDATE ON SPONSORED STUDENTS [NATHAN DANIEL

NATHANIEL AND NENG'IDA DANIEL NATHANIEL.

Greetings from UPENDO FRIENDS PRIMARY SCHOOL.

We are writing to express our sincere gratitude for your generous support in paying school fees on behalf of the parents of two of our students. Your commitment has brought great relief to the families and has enabled the children to continue with their studies without disruption.

We would also like to inform you that starting next year 2026, there will be a slight increase of Tsh. 150,000. The new annual fee will be as shown on our school fee for 2026 attached with this letter.

Additionally, we are pleased to inform you that one of the student you are supporting, NATHAN DANIEL NATHANIEL, will be completing his primary education next year 2026 in standard seven. We are confident that with your continued support and encouragement, he will excel in his final year.

Once again, thank you for being part of this noble journey. Your generosity is making a lasting impact.

Warm regards,

MAJIGE MAREGESI BURUYA
THE SCHOOL HEAD TEACHER



P.O. Box 15720, Arusha Tanzania



info@upendofriendsschool.org



www.upendofriendsschool.org



CamScanner



Evangelical Lutheran
Church (ELCA)
101 S. Duck St.
Stillwater OK 74074

MINISTRY STAFF

Pastor ~ Breck Cogswell
Director of Music ~ Krystal Hennessey
Choir Director ~ Elizabeth Albright
Office Coordinator ~ Lisa Murray-Francis
Parish Nurse ~ Cindy Pennie
Media Specialist~ Olie Weaver

CHURCH OFFICE

Hours: Monday thru Thursday 8am-1pm
Friday- 8 - 11am

Telephone numbers: 405-372-3074,
372-0879 (please leave a message!)

Email Address: salemelc@sbcglobal.net
Church Website: salemstillwaterok.org



WE ARE HIS HOUSE.
HEBREWS 3:6

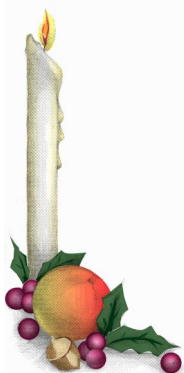
Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday, December 14 after the 9:30 service

We will vote on a budget for 2026
and we will elect a voting
member for Synod Assembly
this Spring.

Your presence is important.



**May the Christ child dwell
in your hearts and home!**



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Wednesday, December 24, 7pm

This year there will be one Christmas Eve
service at 7pm.

The service will be live-streamed.

From the Staff of
Salem Lutheran
Pastor Breck, Krystal, Elizabeth,
Lisa, Cindy, and Olie.